

Norwegian and Mexican National Curricula seen in the light of Indigenous Education

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate what are the content and purpose of indigenous education according to the National curriculum of Mexico and Norway, respectively. The intention is to analyse and compare the two National curricula in order to gain an understanding of their reality and at the same time look for similarities and differences between them. With foundations on the premises of critical theory, which is considered essential to address the education of indigenous groups when discussing their inclusion in society, the study analyses the content of each curriculum considering themes such as ideology, culture, identity, participation and inclusion. A qualitative hermeneutic approach was chosen followed by a cross-national design. This enabled me to choose a Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) as the tool for data collection and textual analysis.

The findings suggest that the two curricula recognize the need to adapt the national education to the historical and cultural context of the indigenous groups where language is the vehicle through which culturally relevant education is transmitted. The underlying idea is that the cultural memory of these groups be preserved and fomented in order to enrich, and form the basis for, a larger national identity. Moreover, both curricula seek to educate citizens from all areas of society whose decisions are grounded in the basic democratic principles of tolerance and diversity. The amount of social space reserved to an autonomous indigenous identity seems to be broader, in inter-curricular terms, in the Mexican curriculum, yet better-implemented in its Norwegian counterpart. Such reality makes itself apparent in the fact that inclusive education in Norway, in regard to indigenous groups, counts with a relatively longer tradition as well as with greater material resources and infrastructure.

The study concludes by suggesting that the political deference on the part of indigenous groups in Mexico towards the policy-making of the central government generates a culture of frustration and political apathy that prevents the kind of political change needed to match Scandinavian standards. This reality can be contrasted with the fact that parliamentary participation of Sami groups in Norway, however limited, has been both ensured by the central government as well as rightfully attained by the Sami groups themselves. Considering the implications in regard to inclusive education we may conclude that a gap in national human resources is, if not altogether breached to a full extent, at least addressed through the idoneous channels.

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Abbreviations

CONAPRED.....	National Council to Prevent Discrimination
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics
K06.....	Knowledge Promotion
LGEIB.....	General Guidelines on Bilingual Intercultural Education for Indigenous Children
L97.....	Core Curriculum for Primary, Secondary and Adult Education in Norway
PE.....	Curriculum for Basic Education 2011
PSE	Sectorial Education Program 2007-2012
QCA.....	Qualitative Content Analysis
QF.....	The Quality Framework
SCSFL.....	Subject Curriculum in Sami as a first Language
SCSSL.....	Subject Curriculum in Sami as a Second Language
UN.....	United Nations
UNESCO.....	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1 Introduction

I first became acquainted with theories of inclusion education, especially Booth's and Ainscow's, during the autumn of 2010. My immediate reaction to this material was to feel a strong urge for academic solidarity and structural change needed to improve the social conditions of marginalized groups. Limited access to education is one of the many obstacles these groups find along the way. Despite the fact that inclusion supports the idea that every person who exists within the confines of society has the right and responsibility to be actively involved in it (Booth, 2011), the members of ethnic groups generally encounter myriad barriers that prevent them from learning and participation. This leads, sadly and unavoidably, to ethnic group detriment and exclusion.

Education is the vehicle through which this situation could ameliorate. New information can be delivered, and as a result new patterns of thought can be developed. The national curriculum serves as introduction to a particular form of life; it has the power to prepare students for subordinate or dominant positions in society, i.e., it furthers social mobility (McLaren, 2009). Further, it is also through the curriculum that these intentions can be transmitted, preparing indigenous children and young people first of all to feel proud of their heritage, and secondly, to take control over their lives and make informed decisions. Knowledge must be useful, meaningful, and adapted to the learner's needs. Thereby, learners must be active participants in the learning process, not mere receptors (Freire, 2000).

1.1 Background and Problem Statement

As explained in the United Nations (UN) Report of the State of Indigenous People (United Nations, 2009), these groups have long suffered from marginalization and segregation. Even today, after many international treaties have been signed and ratified, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 (1989), the UN Indigenous and Tribal People, and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). The situation is far from being ideal. In relation to education, the report confirms that indigenous peoples

experience a deep educational gap and have lower levels of education than their non-indigenous counterparts due to poverty, isolation, marginalization, geographic isolation and conflicts, among other things. Moreover, national school curricula tend to have a very narrow focus on indigenous peoples, their culture, language and traditions. In the case where indigenous content is present in the curricula, teachers might not be properly trained and materials are usually scarce if not altogether obsolete. Some national curricula even reinforce negative stereotypes, portraying indigenous peoples as underdeveloped, weak or uncivilized, in contrast to the population of the modern, developed, mature nation-state (Simon & Smith, 2001). All of this has a strong impact on both indigenous and in the non-indigenous sectors of society, for each group identity partly shapes the other (Jenkins, 2008, p. 19).

It is through the discourse of the national curricula that children of indigenous heritage are introduced to basic technical and practical knowledge at school but also to a particular view of their culture (Grollios, 2009). The curriculum cannot include all knowledge, for this reason the prevalence of some content and the justification of that selection shed light over the power relationships that shape society (Cohen , Manion, Morrison, & Bell, 2011, p. 36). If this knowledge conveys reduced or negative information to the receptor group, this finds itself at risk of neglecting part of its own cultural lineage through a process of stigmatization, and in addition to this they risk becoming ostracized in their own environment (United Nations , 2009).

In the particular case of Mexico and Norway, each society includes a considerable number of national minorities. Mexico is a country with a wide diversity of ethnic groups with more than 15.7 million indigenous people who at present speak more than 68 officially-recognized languages (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informatica [INEGI], 2010). It should be stressed that many of these human groups are relegated to the periphery of society due to a living standard well below the poverty line and the cultural and linguistic divide inherent to their natural condition as minority. Such schism prevents participation and involvement in society at large and further endangers the integrity and sustainability of their identity. In short, we can ascertain these groups are caught in the deadlock of a down-spiralling circle. On the one hand, their condition as indigents prevents them from having a voice and an impact on the national culture. On the other hand, their illiteracy ensures and perpetuates their indigence. In Norway the Sami population is estimated between 40, 000 and 60, 000 (SSB, 2012). Each country has a fairly structured approach to indigenous education even though the conditions surrounding it are very different. For instance, in Mexico more

than 68 languages and dialects representing different groups can be found across the country (INEGI, 2010). Out of the almost 16 million, 15% of the population only speak one language and had remained uneducated due to the lack of adapted education in their language, moreover, even though the age for entering school is 6 years old, indigenous children begin attending school between the ages of 9 and 11 (Inmujeres, 2006, p. 27). These appalling numbers make us reflect upon the nature of the current administrations as purveyors of democracy and the need for social change.

With the signature of the San Andres Agreements in 1994 the Mexican government stopped the efforts of “castellanizar” (teaching Spanish as the only official language) the indigenous population in order to create an ideal national identity. Instead, it decided to change policy and welcomed a new pedagogical approach that takes the ethnic groups into consideration, thus preserving their language and culture (Corona, 2008, p. 2). After this initial step, new educational guidelines and institutions were created to specifically deal with indigenous issues were created over the years, such as the General Guidelines on Bilingual Intercultural Education for Indigenous Children (1999) and the current General Direction of Indigenous Education (DGEI in Spanish).

Despite all progress made over the years, the situation of inequality in education did not improve significantly. For instance, according to Villanueva (2011), changes exist mainly in documents and political debates, but in schools indigenous children are very seldom taught in their mother tongue. Teachers are barely prepared to teach the language and the new generations either communicate with their family members in Spanish or are ashamed of speaking their mother tongue. Another proof of the rifts indigenous students encounter along the way is the incompatibility of their knowledge with the national evaluations. In 2011 the CONAPRED (the National Council to Prevent Discrimination) declared that the national evaluation ENLACE is indirectly discriminating indigenous students because it does not include their language or culture (Ruiz, 2012).

The case of Sami people in Norway is somewhat different from that of Mexican indigenous groups. Norway is a country that has been accustomed in recent decades to attend to the educational needs of immigrant and indigenous groups, even if conditions were not always optimal for the latter. This is probably due to the fact that while Mexico is a country that, broadly speaking, produces migrants, Norway is recipient to a steady flow of immigration that must be accommodated and dealt with in accordance with precepts of democracy and

integration. This trend saw to it that Norway could develop a more positive attitude and effective enforcement of policy towards minority groups at large; including and reassessing the role they play in society as an integral part of it. As James Anaya points out (United Nations, 2011), Norway is a leader in the recognition of indigenous rights. Besides, Sami groups reside in Nordic countries, considered among the wealthiest and most developed countries in the world, therefore they do not have to deal with many of the socio-economic concerns which are common to indigenous peoples throughout the world, such as disease, poverty, and hunger (UN, 2011, p. 5). Norway is the only Nordic country that has ratified the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Keskitalo, Mättä, & Uusiau, 2012, p. 330), meaning that the government recognizes the importance of protecting and supporting their history, livelihoods, and language of all Sami groups. As active members of society, Sami people created their own Parliament in 1960 and in 1989 the Sámi College was established (Todal, 2003, p. 187). Additionally, since 1998, cultural, linguistic, and educational rights were given to other cultural minorities living in Norway (Engen, 2010) due to the high rate of migration in the country received in the recent past. The Norwegian educational system represents a unique approach to inclusive education worth of an in-depth study.

1.2 Purpose and Research Questions

As a consequence of the large differences found in the situations of indigenous groups in the two countries it becomes crucial to understand what are the intentions and objectives of each country regarding the education of their national minorities. This understanding can be achieved through an analysis of National curricula. Given this, the main research question is: What is the content of indigenous education according to the curriculum? Accordingly, the sub questions are:

1. Are indigenous students expected to learn about their own culture? And if that is the case, what are they expected to learn?
2. What does the curriculum state about culture and identity?

3. What does the curriculum state about the participation and inclusion of indigenous groups in society?
4. What are the differences and similarities between the National curricula of the two countries?

The study will provide useful data about the current conceptualization of ethnic groups in education, necessary for the adequate development of inclusive education in every country. Additionally, as an individual analysis of each country's curriculum it provides the opportunity of observation and interpretation. Moreover, being a comparative analysis, it represents a unique opportunity to observe how indigenous education is organized in two very different countries. Precisely because they are so different, the study might bring to light new ideas, and opportunities of improvement for both sides. Also, the indigenous groups themselves may find useful to understand how other nations design their curriculum and what content is being highlighted.

This analysis may be of interest for societies whose educational needs are similar to one of the two countries compared here, especially if drafting, redrafting or any other adjustments to their own curriculum are required. This research is meant as a stepping stone toward new studies on the same subject, where countries like Mexico present us with challenging scenarios surrounding indigenous education.

1.3 Research Approach

The perspective of the research is cross-cultural, it entails an individual analysis of the National curriculum of Norway and Mexico, in order to later analyse their similarities and differences. The research is carried out utilizing qualitative methods that provide the suitable framework for thematic interpretation. To carry out the data collection and interpretation Qualitative Content Analysis was selected, which is a thematic analysis concentrated in the relationship between content and context. The sample was obtained from official websites and due to time constraints only the most relevant documents were used in the analysis. Further, because of language differences, obtaining information about the Norwegian curricula in

English represented a bigger obstacle than finding the Mexican documents, but luckily the desired documents were all available in English.

1.4 Organization of the study

The first step of the dissertation is to present the theoretical framework. It is presented in the second chapter and in turn divided in five sections; critical theory, ethnic identity, culture, participation and inclusion, and curriculum. The third chapter describes the methodology used for the research, and discusses the research approach, design and methodology, sample selection and ethical considerations. Chapter four is divided in two parts; first it presents the findings and its analysis separated by categories, and secondly, contains a discussion of what was found. Finally, the concluding remarks and recommendations are stated in chapter five.

2 Theoretical framework

Studying indigenous education requires a notion of particular elements that play a key role in the construction of a relevant pedagogy. Furthermore, in order to be able to answer the research question first we need to be closely related to the topics and ideas that permeate and delimit it. Such topics are discussed in the following sections; first the main ideas of critical theory and its relationship to ethnic minorities and curriculum; second, what does it mean to have an ethnic identity and how it is formed; third, a definition of culture and the implications of cultural diversity in education, and finally what curriculum is, covering the ideologies commonly used to design curricula, how can it incorporate content that includes different groups, and the critical view of curriculum planning and implementation.

2.1 Critical theory

Critical Theory emerged from the Frankfurt School's thoughts against science, positivism and the modern society's changing forms of domination (Giroux, 2009, p. 27). It is not possible to summarize everything said by every author, thus, the main common characteristics will be briefly discussed, followed by an explanation of the use of Critical Theory in education and particularly its relevance in this project.

Positivism and scientist knowledge gave to humanity the ability to answer the unknowns about their context away from superstition and doubt, replacing reason with fixed facts. The generalizable character of this type of information permeated the social sciences and positioned understanding only behind the facts, freezing human beings and their transformative nature. For the critical theorist the problem relays exactly here, since in very situation, evident or not, social relationships shape reality and human action. Therefore, in order to understand the facts one must comprehend its historical situation (Giroux, 2009, p. 34). What is more, according to Marcuse (cited in Entel, Lenarduzzi, & Gerzovich, 2005, p. 45) the world possesses a structure accessible to reason and is also dominated by it. The impulse of it streams from the strength used to talk against the facts of a problematic situation, evidencing the possibilities for improvement.

For Freire (2000) social relationships are relationships of power where one person or group imposes one particular choice over another person transforming the consciousness of the person prescribed into one that with the prescriber's consciousness (known as prescription) (p. 47). The oppressed then, have no purpose except of those prescribed by the oppressors. Giroux (2009, p. 40) explains, based on Bourdieu's ideas, that now days hegemony, or the imposition of ideas, is not acted through force but it is mediated by the cultural institutions such as the state, the church or schools. As McLaren (2009, p. 83) explains, signs and practices of domination are hidden in the pedagogy, for instance, in the decision of which books to use, the content inside the books, plus values and beliefs that are transmitted to the student. Even though the individual has an intrinsic desire of freedom and liberation, Freire continues to explain that at the moment he/she internalizes the oppressor's ideas becomes afraid of freedom. But not only that, the oppressor is also afraid but in a distinct form, is afraid of losing the meaning of existence since the oppressor's identity can only exist insofar dominating the surrounding objects. This is one of the reasons why the curriculum content may include useless information for the indigenous groups, like the situation previously discussed about indigenous education and assessment in Mexico, mere data that maintains the status of the oppressed conditioning them as receptors of knowledge that memorize and repeat.

The aim of Critical Theory is to "articulate a view of theory that has the central task of emancipating people... through their own understandings and actions" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 131). Critical Theory seeks to liberate those disempowered, thus is only through freedom that reason exists. Therefore, is only after they discovered to be *hosting* the oppressor's ideology that the oppressed is able to untie him/her from it and reflect about the situation (Cohen et al., p. 31).

For Habermas (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 134) science is not absolute, on the contrary, it offers just one kind of knowledge over others. Different human interest point knowledge to a variety of directions, therefore knowledge is considered the outcome of human activity that is motivated by natural needs and interests through which reality maybe seen and acted upon, this is named by him as the 'Knowledge-constitutive interests'. Under this theory three types of knowledge can be found; technical, practical and emancipatory.

According to several authors (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Cohen et al., 2011; Crossley, 2013; Crossley, 2005) the characteristics of each are as follow; the technical interest is generalizable

and typically instrumental. It exerts control over the environment and renders it predictable, necessary conditions for human survival. Applied to the curriculum it is usually seen as scientific knowledge not to be questioned only 'received' as truthful. Related to interpretivism, on the other hand, practical knowledge strives from the idea that humans have a need for understanding and communicating with others, hence, considers individual views about a specific situation, is able to inform and guide knowledge but with no intent of altering it. It is the process view of the curriculum without further action. Finally, it is only the emancipatory interest which notices and names the prevailing social, cultural and political conditions in any society with the specific intentions of improving them, further; it is interested in rational autonomy and freedom. It involves the political reading of the curriculum and purposes of education, asking what knowledge is important and for who is benefiting from it.

To fulfil this emancipatory interest, knowledge should present a discourse free of distortions, instruct how to restructure society and provide motivation to action (Giroux, 2009, p. 50). For Freire knowledge should make students critical thinkers and most important must arise from the students' needs and interests, in his own words "we...must never provide the people with programs which have little or nothing to do with their own preoccupations, doubts, hopes and fears" (Freire, 2000, p. 95). If indigenous education is based on what other groups or educators consider important then as a result the transmitted knowledge will not be relevant or even remembered by the individuals who are supposed to receive and implement it. On the contrary, school desertion increases instead, and motivation for action decreases, creating self-conscious students who are insecure of their abilities and possibilities of liberation.

2.2 Ethnic Identity

In general terms, many authors (Crossley, 2005; Gordon & Mejia, 2006; Moje, 2006; Roberts, 2010) describe identity as the ways in which we trace and make sense of ourselves; the process of choosing certain categories where to locate ourselves and reject others. In other words entails a demarcation of what one is and what one is not. It can also be understood as the result of the combination of two interdependent components, the nominal, or name used to identify the individual or group, and the virtual, experiences that come within the name and

its consequences (Jenkins, 2008, p. 76). The name and the identities are signified mainly on the interaction with other people in many different situations through the social codes and meaning systems to which they have access. Gordon and Mejia (2006) explain that one person's identity could be conformed of several cultural characteristics of a certain group that could be altered by the interaction with other groups. Thence, one person could have several identities but individuals will always have one dominant identity.

A more pertinent way of looking at identity for this research, is to talk about the ethnic identity of groups and the individuals that conform them. Ethnicity can be defined as the construction of a social identity based on descent and culture of a particular group. For Cristina-Georgiana & Cuza, (2013) an individual's ethnic identity is the realization of his place in the spectrum of cultures and the consequent purposeful behaviour aimed at achieving enrolment and acceptance into a particular group. Moreover, it also includes certain features of a group that automatically assign an individual's group membership. The characteristics of each group are not fixed, on the contrary are created and changed according to other groups and/or political purposes (Fenton, 2010).

Generally speaking, ethnic groups are: 1) biologically self-perpetuating; the members of the group share basic cultural values which they manifest in their own unique ways; 2) they have a specific style of communication (might be a particular language or dialect) and, 3) individuals belonging to that group are recognized as so by other members of the group and other groups as well (Jenkins, 2008, p. 18). Although this is true about ethnic groups, Frederik Barth found other characteristics of these groups after observing peasant and nomadic communities in several countries (which include Norway and Mexico). For him, ethnic identities exist due to the 'boundaries' used to mark off one group from another, thus defining social organization as the key element maintaining this boundaries. Moreover, even though ethnic identities are related to culture, it is not what specifically defines the group and many other characteristics help to draw the limits of a group such as religion, geographic location, non-verbal behaviour and language, being the later also an important factor (Fenton, 2010; Jenkins, 2008).

It is worth noting that ethnicity is never fixed, individuals do not choose in which group to be born, however, what will ultimately define their identity are the interplaying characteristics of that group. For instance, groups with a strong sense of identity might have stronger ties with their native language, but depending on the factors surrounding the language members might

feel less inclined to use it as their main form of communication. According a research conducted by Khilkhanova and Khikhanov (2004) the use of a particular language by an ethnic group although consider to be one of the main defining elements can be altered by the size of the community, the availability of institutionalized environments for them to use the language, and status. Often, like in the case of the Buryat group studied in this research, the native language is regarded as low-status hence younger members of the group and up to some extent their parents, prefer acquiring skills in the national language (Russian in this research). This is because being fluent in it increases social opportunities, such as access to good education and better job opportunities, and it is accepted as more prestigious (p. 90).

Ethnicity then, as described by (Jenkins, 2008), depends on the interaction of groups to define boundaries both inside the group (group identification between members) as well as outside (social categorization done by other groups). Within the group peers socialize the ethnic identity in many ways since early stages of life by using particular verbal and non-verbal cues that are exclusively used by them such as a specific language, clothing, music, bodily adornments, etc.; place of residence; kinship relationships and , sometimes physical appearance (race) although it might not be the case for every ethnic group. Outside the groups the boundaries could be formed by being a member of, or attending specific informal groups or institutions such as schools, churches or other organizations. Furthermore, ethnicity is also produced and reproduced by political factors, as stated by Weber (in Gordon & Mejia, 2006, p. 25). The State, according to its needs has the capacity to create a certain identity for its citizens. In other words, the States have a need to understand who is living in the territory and how they are living on it in order to justify policy development and allocation of resources (Jenkins, 2008, p. 71).

Normally, the external categorization is made by others who have more power than the ethnic group being defined, consequently advancing and gaining more power and resources at the expense of the other group. Therefore ethnic categorization tends to be negative, pejorative and degrading (Fenton, 2010; Jenkins, 2008). The results of such categorization have direct impact on knowledge production, only considering important certain types of knowledge and understanding leaving behind indigenous or ethnic knowledges (Dei, 2011, p. 27). Identity is closely related to literacy and learning, since it reflects the social context of the students, as found by Catherine Wallace (2008) identities are invoked to build bridges between the children's diverse personal histories and the texts and practices validated by school.

According to her research both come into play in what children and adolescents in schools age opt to read in the first place and how we process text, whereby, how a student interprets and reproduces knowledge is in part related to the identities invoked (p. 64). According to this it could be understood that students who are taught with consideration of their context (and ethnic identity) should be able to understand how knowledge is constructed, how it relates to power, will develop important skill to participate in the construction of knowledge itself, which in turn will help the nation to participate in the democratic ideals (Dei, 2011, p. 149).

2.3 Culture

Although culture is embedded in ethnicity, we shall not consider them as synonyms. Ethnicity entails the boundaries between groups and the cultural traits are situated inside those boundaries. Therefore, culture signifies “the particular ways in which a group lives out and makes sense of its ‘given’ circumstances and conditions of life” (McLaren, 2009, p. 74). Gordon & Mejia (2006) based in several definitions describe culture as a pattern of meanings transmitted from generation to generation; the individual and collective ways of thinking, believing and knowing of a group (Liamputtong, 2010, p. 19) This patterns carry styles of communicate, and at the same time develop and preserve a set of specific characteristics. Thence, culture includes a group of values, languages and dialects, behaviours and points of view about life (Gordon & Mejia, pp. 52-53). Culture is also not generalizable, because every society is configured by a variety of groups and each group might have different points of view about the world. For instance, “language is one of the most universal and diverse forms of expression of human culture, and perhaps even the most essential one” (UNESCO, 2006, p. 13). Each language is a door to a different view of reality; a reflection of cultural diversity and cannot be precisely quantified or categorized, therefore all languages and dialects are similarly actual and important (Fenton, 2010).

According to Paulo Freire (2000), culture is also shaped by unequal relations of power where factors such as ethnicity, age, sex, gender, and social class play a key role in the production and legitimatization of knowledge where ultimately the dominant culture decides for the subordinate one. As has been discussed throughout this literature review, when such power

relationships come into play, the production, validation and transmission of culturally specific types of knowledge is at risk. In other words, the dominant culture owns the social practices and presentations that affirm the interests, concerns and values of the social class which controls both the material and symbolic wealth of a society. As consequence, the subordinate culture accepts and reproduces almost without questioning the decisions made by the former group (p. 75). Building up from the ideas of Critical Theory and considering that each group enacts particular cultural forms, (symbols and social practices that express culture) knowledge production should reflect the “complexity of an ethnic group’s culture, as well as its varied historical and contemporary representations” (Liamputtong, 2010, p. 19). What is more, all actors involved in education (teachers, pupils, curriculum developers, etc.) invest their cultural baggage into what is taught, and how it is conveyed. Therefore, education is molded by culture, but at the same time culture exists thanks to its continual transmission and enrichment through education, which if planned properly can enhance the positive development of society. Finally, is relevant to mention that language issues are also central to the development of education. Acknowledging the value of the linguistic competencies of indigenous groups is fundamental for their empowerment in democratic and plural societies, as they determine school achievement, promote access to other cultures and encourage openness to cultural exchange (UNESCO, 2006, p. 13).

2.4 Participation and inclusion

Every nation has the responsibility of providing equal access to all forms of education for all cultural groups of the population (UNESCO, 2006). For Tony Booth (2011), increasing participation for all implies not only that everyone is entitled to participate in their local educational settings, but that these settings are developed to be responsive to diversity in ways that value equally all children, young people and their families, and the adults who work with them. Building a strong community is linked to building a strong code of values, such values should enable individuals to take control over their life, to become critical thinkers that act according to democratic principles. Such project would be ideally developed in accordance with the precepts of civility and communal solidarity, underpinnings of a solid democracy. The curriculum should be structured around these same values and at the same time consider the knowledge, experience, and interests of learners. A human being is linked to

other beings within the larger frame of societal interconnectedness by the simple premise that he cannot carry on with his daily toil without taking others' into account; i.e.; communal growth, harmony, and progress are sustained by a greater effort. This leads us to the idea that being part of a community is inextricably bound to each individual's involvement with the set of rights and obligations expected of him as part of a common groundwork. The intricacies of a system in which the expectations, demands, and approval of such richly complex mosaic of human diversity can set in motion the clogs of progress or generate stagnation. In short, aims cannot be reached without a common interest and a dynamic flow of communication among community members (Dewey, 1916). Such an ideal can be achieved through a critical stand toward, and improvement of, quality curricular production, in which nations contrive devices to excel in the education and community sectors. To this end, we may conclude that the ethical groundwork, professionalism, and output of curriculum developers should match the polyphony of needs voiced by the target groups with the end of elevating each particular constituent to the unalienable status of citizen.

2.5 Curriculum

Curriculum contents are 'the organized systematized and developed "re-presentation" to individuals of the things about which they want to know more' (Freire, 2000, p. 92). In critical pedagogy the curriculum is seen as a form of cultural politics where the participants learn to question the information available to them, removing the dominatory (or discriminatory) messages, only taking what is culturally and practically significant for them. Therefore, in relation to culture and ethnic minorities, the curriculum should transmit culture and help young people to draw critically upon knowledge in the interest of their personal growth as well as social improvement (Roberts, 2010).

Curriculums as holistic entities are composed by four types of content, intended, enacted, assessed and learned (Porter, 2004). The intended curriculum, which might also be known as explicit, is captured in state content standards; the enacted curriculum refers to how teachers transmit the knowledge to students and what knowledge is transmitted; the assessed curriculum refers to student achievement tests and, the learned curriculum deals with are students learning and the consequences of such knowledge. This research is focused in the

intended curriculum, which can also be explained as the compound of statements of what every student must know and be able to do by some specified point in time. The intended curriculum should be created reflecting the needs and actual context of the student. It has a direct impact on what will be taught, hence has consequences on what is assessed and what the students find useful for their future lives outside school.

2.5.1 Michael's Schiro Curriculum ideologies

When constructing the intended curricula, curriculum developers create curriculum contents and materials starting from specific ideological stances known as curriculum ideologies.

Schiro (2008) analysed the different schemes used by curriculum theorists and concluded with four major ideological stands: scholar academic, social efficiency, learner centered and social recognition. Each of them entails a collection of ideas, a way of looking at things, beliefs of how the world should be organized and function. Moreover, they carry particular cultural inputs of how things should be done, prescribing roles in society and forms of action.

According to him, the characteristics of each ideology are as follow:

Within the *scholar academic* ideology, the curriculum is intended to initiate children into academic disciplines, hence, they will learn to feel, behave and think as in such disciplines in the same way future scholars or researchers do, hence, it is design exclusively by experts in the fields. Further, the curriculum becomes a re-presentation of knowledge already known and generalized as truthful. Outside the concerns of the discipline itself, every other topic is excluded from the development of the curriculum, in other words, it does not consider the society, the needs of the learner, his/her learning process or the learning environment. The one and only aims is to develop the intellect through the pursuit of knowledge.

Curriculum creators working under this ideology do not acknowledge the political, social, economic, or political demands outside the disciplines; therefore, the curriculum is formulated prior to the analysis of society. They understand that many distinct academic disciplines exist and each of them has specific parameters to understand knowledge, therefore they accept that there is more than one way of knowing and more than one type of knowledge. For them as long as the knowledge comes from inside one of the disciplines, it does not constitute a

problem because they assume there is “equivalence between the world of the intellect, the world of knowledge, and the academic disciplines” (p. 21). Due to this, in order to determine what knowledge should be taught in schools the world of knowledge needs to be classified.

To prepare the discipline contents to fit the curriculum first developers must determine such things as how students should learn the discipline, how to explain new discoveries and how it was acquired. Only knowledge that can be externalized, objectified and impersonalized within the objective reality is suitable for curriculum content. Additionally, the educational resources, teachability, learnability, as well as psychological and sociological advices on how to teach are sought after the essence of the curriculum is determined.

Social efficiency educators believe that the goal of education is to train students “in the skills and procedures they will need in the workplace and at home to live productive lives and perpetuate the functioning of society” (Schiro, 2008, p. 4). Hence, curriculum developers believe that curriculum objectives must be design according in behavioural terms, as demonstrable skills or things that people can do, not in content that is acquired. Such curriculum objectives provide clear specifications of what the educational job is, in other words, for a given objective to be attained, students must have experiences when she or she is able to undergo the kind of behaviour implied by the objective. People are seen first members of society and second individuals. As members of society they are responsible of keeping society functioning and, of preparing children to live a meaningful adult life in society.

In the eyes of Social Efficiency learning is seen as having five characteristics; consists of a change in behaviour; learning only takes place as a result of the learner’s practice of the behaviour they are to learn; learning means acquiring specific responses to particular stimuli rather than general responses to vague stimuli which gradually will render the student to build up more complex repertoires of behaviour and, all aspects of learning can be addressed using the same process.

Curricula developers design the objectives employing “behavioural engineering”, meaning that the educational purposes are obtained from clients for whom the programs are designed. Thus, behavioural engineers create the specific behavioural objectives that the learner must acquire by carefully examining the program’s educational purpose.

The *Learner Centered* ideology focuses in the needs and concerns of individuals. Growth and education are considered synonyms; taking that into account schooling shall provide learners with educational experiences compatible with their stage of social, emotional and intellectual development. In other words, the central idea is to lead children through an “organic” learning process where they are never pressure to acquire academic skills and knowledge before they are developmentally ready to do so. Further, this ideology sees people as naturally good. It believes that “peoples natural modes of growth and impulses for action will be good and constructive if they are not inhibited or distorted, and that children will naturally grow into happy, constructive, well-functioning adults if they are allowed to do so” (p. 103).

The ideal school is an integrated school; people are seen as holistic organisms; conglomerates of intellectual, social, emotional, and physical components. The same applies to knowledge, they don’t considered it as belonging to a particular discipline, on the contrary, it is integrated in the learner’s understanding of reality which might not correspond with the ways academic disciplines have partitioned it.

Applied to the curriculum the Learner Centered ideology involves an effort to locate the child’s own interests and needs as the starting point of education. It should be organized around the individual’s intentions, focused on their own nature rather than on the educator’s intentions to teach them. The desire of curriculum developers under this ideology is to let individuals grow naturally into the people they will become, hence, society, parents, politicians, and schools should not attempt to control children’s growth to fulfil their expectations. As a consequence, curriculum is created in such a way that student’s autonomy is preserved and only direction for their individual growth and learning is provided.

Curriculum objectives are defined in terms of experiences learners should have, not in terms of knowledge. Parallel to curriculum building, curriculum developers also design materials and activities that empathize the present in people’s lives, which promote the enjoyment of the learning experiences without worrying about how to reach a predetermined future goal. In this way, specific curriculum content is organized by units of work instead of subjects. Units of work are much broader that the later, they multidimensional areas of investigation that encompass several subjects.

The *Social Reconstruction* ideology views education as the path that facilitates the construction of a more just society prepared to offer maximum satisfaction to all of its

members. The ideology emerges from the stand that society is unhealthy, threatened by many problems such as poverty, racism, wars, illiteracy, political corruption, etc., that are based in misconceptions of knowledge, culture and power. Thereby, social reconstruction theorists believe that the only way in which society can be saved is through actions intended to save society from self-destruction which end in the creation of a better society where social justice for all people prevails. From this stand education plays a major role; if it is deployed along the lines they recommend, it can apprise people to analyse and understand social problems, envision a world in which those problems do not exist and act to make that vision become a reality.

They believe there is not good individual or society apart from the conception of the nature of the good society, which is not given by nature; it has to be forged by man. Thence, “the good individual”, “the good education” and “truth and knowledge are defined by culture. Social Reconstructionists tend to focus on hidden aspects of the curriculum that inadvertently shape human relationships and behaviour. In order to alter such conditions educational programs that will enable people to see the problems of their present situation and the future possibilities of improvement are developed considering the particular conditions of each society. Thus, learners are considered sculptors of their own learning; they are encouraged to choose from a variety of sensory experiences those that are consistent with their context. Moreover, learning requires both social context and social interactions.

2.5.2 Multicultural curriculum and bilingual education

Multicultural education and the curriculum

Usually the common knowledge about ethnic groups is institutionalized inside the schools, stranded in misconceptions and lack of knowledge generated in the wider society and finally conveyed by teachers in the classrooms (Banks, 2006b). Therefore, for multicultural education one of the main goals is to reform schools, colleges and universities so that students from diverse racial, ethnic and social groups are able to experience educational equality (Banks, 2006a, p. 3).

Curricula from the multiculturalist perspective must transform, should be constantly changing, adjusting itself to different perspectives in order to accommodate a broad variety of cultural stances. Thus, a variety of cultural literacies should be applied to the curriculum. This means that “even though a person of a different culture may not be literate in the dominant culture, he or she will exhibit literacy in his or her own culture” (Xu, 2010). The intention is then, that person exhibits literacy within his/her own culture, hence, the curriculum should, recognize, value, and accept cultural literacies other than the national or mainstream literacies as a mark of being culturally literate.

Following this line of thought, James A. Banks (2008) states that inside the curriculum ethnic content needs to be organized and later taught with key concepts, themes and issues based in the experience of such groups. He proposes eleven topics that must be included in curriculums dealing with indigenous education: 1) Origins of the culture and migration, 2) shared culture values and symbols, 3) ethnic identity and sense of peoplehood, as result of common history and current experiences, 4) perspectives, worldviews and frames of reference, 5) ethnic institutions and self-determination, 6) democratic, social, political and economic status of the group must be determined, 7) prejudice, discrimination and racism, as to understand the past, present and future experiences of the groups, 8) intraethnic diversity to prevent the creation of new stereotypes and misconceptions, 9) how assimilation and acculturation work, 10) revolutionary or fundamental changes in their society across time, and 11) knowledge construction (how knowledge and interpretations are constructed).

Curricular concerns about ethnic and cultural diversity are more complex than the presentation of factual information about minority and marginalized groups. They involve deeply entangled moral dilemmas, correcting negative attitudes and beliefs, transformative insights and actions, and the redistributions of power and privilege. They affect all people in some way or another and are, therefore, appropriate for all students, school settings, and subjects, but not in identical ways, meaning that critical features of multicultural curriculum are using multiple perspectives and different ways of knowing in examining ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity (Gray G. , 2010).

Intercultural bilingual education and the curriculum

Similarly, in the quest for social equality the model of intercultural bilingual education also plays a relevant role. From this perspective human diversity must be celebrated, therefore the

aim for education is to contribute in the development of the child's ethnic identity, intercultural skills, attitudes, values and knowledge, in other words to equip them to participate in an increasingly diverse society (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment). Consequently, it promotes the interaction between culturally different groups fostering the mutual recognition and respect of their differences (Consejo Federal de la Educacion, 2010). However, the challenge for Intercultural Bilingual Education is to establish and maintain the balance between conformity with its general guiding principles and the requirements of specific cultural contexts. (UNESCO, 2006).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Guidelines for Intercultural Education (2006), for the curriculum to be culturally responsible, it must be built upon the diverse systems of knowledge of the learners (history, values, social systems, technologies, etc.), making them appreciate their cultural heritage, leaving them able to make the best use of their local resources which in consequence will fortify their identity.

The curricula should also provide learners with skill that enable them to contribute to respect, understanding and solidarity among individuals, communities and nations. According to the UNESCO guidelines it should include: a positive perspective of cultural diversity with rich information about the cultural heritage that the indigenous groups bring to the nation; understanding of the national ethnic groups as well as of other nations; bring critical awareness of the struggle against racism and discrimination, respecting different cultural perspectives and patterns of thinking; and, awake an understanding of the right and duties binding for all individuals, groups and nations.

2.5.3 Critical pedagogy and the curriculum

As shown in the curriculum ideologies section, as a common norm curriculum content is determined externally by experts but, from Paulo Freire and the critical pedagogy's point of view it should be emerge from an interactive process known as 'thematic investigation', through which the basic terms used by the learners in everyday life are discovered (Morrow & Torres, 2002, p. 122).

Within thematic investigation power plays a central defining role in matters of curriculum planning and implementation (Cohen , Manion, Morrison, & Bell, 2011, p. 37). Freire (2000) asserts that many of the curricula fail in the sense that they are built from a particular point of view disregarding to whom the program was design in the first place. Such scenery occurs because those who have political power are also in charge of making curriculum decisions (Monnin , 2010) and, therefore, as explained by Critical Theory their identities and ideas about other groups are the most represented in the documents. The consideration of cultural, ethnic and language differences among students in all aspects of curriculum promotes schools success (Fang He , 2010). He highlights the importance of avoiding providing students with programs which have little or nothing to do with their own context; preoccupations, hope and dreams. If this happens to be the case the resulting education process might be banked or unsuccessful (p. 96).

When education becomes an act of depositing information in students where they solely receive, memorize and repeat and, furthermore they are being deprived from acquiring useful knowledge and inquiring skills then, such education can be known as the banking process of education. What is more, this process inhibits the student's creative power and thus rendering them powerless. Alternatively, the problem-posing education breeds critical thinkers whom will liberate themselves through praxis. In this process students are not merely receptors of static education, on the contrary, they become jointly responsible for an educational process in which both the teacher and him/her grow. Therefore, the construction of curriculum content should be from the bottom up, offering workers, farmers, and minorities programs relevant to their world view (Grollios, 2009, p. 66). Teachers or whomever is in charge of curriculum development need to investigate the reality of the group in order to understand their "thematic universe" and from it extract the specific themes for that particular point of time.

3 Research methodology

The present chapter has the intention of delimit the methodology implemented in the study. Every research, regardless of its aim, must have specific foundations for planning and proceeding. The following sections contain a detail description of the research approach, strategies and methods used in this particular research. The first section deals with the explanation of what is qualitative research as well as and a justification of its use in the research. The Methodology part covers several elements; describes the design under which the process was conducted, the sample and the specific method of data collection and analysis. Finally, the last section refers to the ethical considerations for the research. The research findings and their consequent discussion are presented in the next chapter.

3.1 Research approach

Since the purpose of the research is to contextualize and interpret the content of the curriculum, according to Szyjka (2012), a qualitative approach was the most appropriate choice. When defining qualitative research the author mentions that it “can provide insights to multifaceted, complex social situations or problems” (p. 112), hence, enables the path to deeply relate with the situation and, places within a more meaningful context even though it might not be generalizable for the common of the population. Qualitative approaches emerge from an interpretative paradigm. In the words of Stephens (2009, p. 12) “the setting in the research process is a fabric from which meaning and interpretation can occur”. Interpretivism accepts that natural reality and social reality are different, believing that meaning arise from social interaction (Gray D. , 2009, pp. 20-21), it tries to explain how individual choose and interact in social situations (Bartlett & Burton, 2009, p. 21).

As Bryman explains (2012), for interpretivism theory emerges from the data and, what is more, reality and meanings are submitted by the experiences of individuals, therefore defining reality as subjective. Is on this idea where it differs from positivism, from the positivistic point of view research should be based on theory and only the phenomena that is observable

and confirmed by the senses can genuinely be considered as knowledge, positioning it as generalizable (Bryman, 2012; Robson, 2011). In other words, as Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010, p. 420) explain, for positivism (and quantitative research) theories explain phenomena, seeking to discover universal laws governing both the physical world and human behaviour, in contrast, for interpretivism (and qualitative research) human and physical worlds are separated from each other hence cannot be broken down into variables to be studied. The authors mention as well another difference between the two approaches is that in qualitative research the design is very carefully described whereas in quantitative approaches such as this one, the design continues to emerge as the study evolves (p.425).

The Qualitative approach as described by Liamputtong (Liamputtong, 2010, p. 11) bears an important characteristic for this particular research; it relies heavily in words and meanings. Following Critical thinking the author also mentions it allows hearing the voices, or noticing the situation and needs, of those who are silenced, othered and marginalized. Therefore, it is the suitable approach to study indigenous issues since attempts to avoid the imposition of previous hypotheses or culturally inappropriate frames of reference (Stephens, 2009, p. 8) favouring contextualization and detail (Mangen, 1999, p. 110). Both are particularly important elements for researches dealing with cultural boundaries since it highlights representation and enrolls everyone involved in a reflexive process throughout the investigation (Liamputtong, 2010; Mengen, 1999).

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Design

This research will analyse and compare two National Curriculums with the intention of gaining understanding of their reality and at the same time looking for similarities and differences, such a design is commonly known as comparative (Bryman, 2012, p. 72). More specifically, since the two situations being compared come from different countries the design can be denominated as cross-national or cross-cultural. As the name implies, it has a culturally appropriate approach to the topic in question by attempting to provide a contextual understanding of the interrelationships between what is written in the curriculum and the

goals this content seeks to reach (Stephens, 2009, p. 8). Moreover, a cross-cultural research respects the cultural baggage of each country therefore, reduces the risk of failing to appreciate the uniqueness of the findings (Bryman, 2012, p. 74).

Comparative researches can lead to interesting, fresh insights about a topic that has been researched before. Furthermore they allow contextualizing, clarifying and also explaining the phenomena.. According to Hantrais and Mangen (1996, p. 2) other strengths of this kind of design are that comparisons can lead to understanding central issues from a different light, and as mention in the introduction, can lead to the identification of gaps in knowledge hence pointing to future research paths. Additionally, conceptual equivalence was proven by checking that both countries signed and ratified international agreements about indigenous groups, showing that they agree and have similar understanding about the issue.

Several authors (Bryman, 2012; Mangen, 1999 & Hantrais & Mangen, 1996) state that when conducting a comparative design a multiple case study is taking place. In a multiple case study the individual cases will bring understanding about the topic, in this research the central topic, or quintain as Robert Stake (2006) denominates it, is the indigenous perspective of the national and the two cases are the Mexican and Norwegian curriculums. The quintain is going to be understood by studying each case individually focusing in its complexity and situational uniqueness (p. 6-7) to obtain an explanation of the phenomena as it appears in the cases.

As in any research design some challenges might arise, first the use of different languages could create cultural interference at the moment of searching for similar meanings or concepts due to the non-translatability (Hantrais & Mangen, 1996; Carmel, 1999) characteristic of some, therefore, in order to cope with this, the findings will be examined in relation with their own cultural societal context (Hantrais & Mangen, 1996, p. 11). Such an issue is closely related to the consequential validity (Stake, 2006, p. 35) which can be achieved by upholding assertions with illustrations and repetition of data gather to reduce misinterpretation.

Previous dissertations and peer-review articles had used this same design; Faas (2011) engaged in a comparative curriculum research of Greece, England and Germany seeking to understand how cultural diversity intertwined in certain topics. Bakahwemama (2009), Khustochka (2009), and Jacoby (2006) wrote master dissertations comparing curriculums from different countries or cultures inside the same country, like in the present case, these three dissertations involved a comparison of their home country's curriculum and an European

country or culture. Several issues must be taken into account when conducting comparative curriculum research; first of all, if there exists an equivalence between countries about the same issue. It could take the form of conceptual equivalence, for example the definition of indigenous in each country, or linguistic equivalence and the problem of translation (Faas, 2011, p. 477). In this study equivalence existed because the Norwegian documents were interpreted directly from the official English version and the Mexican curriculum did not represent a problem because it is written in Spanish, which is the researcher's mother tongue.

3.2.2 Sample

Official documents are socially constructed; hence understanding them represents language seen as a form of social practice. Following the rules of documentary research (McCulloch, 2004) all the documents mention in the previous sample are: 1) authentic since they were obtained from the government's official internet site, confirming at the same time that those are the most updated versions; 2) reliable, they are well preserved and catalogued and were written by experts on the field of education within each country; 3) their meaning is comprehensible; and 4) both were created considering a theoretical framework that was taken into account at the moment of conducting the collection and analysis of data.

The sample consists of documents from the Norwegian and Mexican curriculum. The Norwegian documents are "The knowledge promotion" (K06) (2006) which includes two documents the first part or core curriculum: "Core Curriculum for Primary, Secondary and Adult Education in Norway [L97]" created in 1997 and the "Quality Framework [QF]" created in 2006, "Subject curriculum in Sami as a first language [SASFL]" (1997) and "Subject curriculum in Sami as a second language [SASSL]" (1997), all versions in English. Is important to recognize that although these versions are the keys to the accomplishment of the research, might also represent the interest of the Norwegian government to be seen by the international community under a particular light.

The Mexican documents are, "Curriculum for Basic Education [PE for its acronym in Spanish]" (2011), "Sectorial Education Program 2007-2012 [PSE for its acronym in Spanish]" (2006), and the General Guidelines on Bilingual Intercultural Education for Indigenous Children [LGEIB for its acronym in Spanish] (1999). The new administration entered in course in 2012 and with it the new National Development Plan which in turn will

brings new plans and educational projects. Given these circumstances the documents chosen to be analysed here are the most recent and updated versions available, thus they are closest to current reality of the country and less likely to receive major changes. Deliberately the individual Curriculums for Basic Education for the primary levels (1-6 grades) were left out of the sample since analysing them will significantly extend the research process. Nonetheless, these curriculums are of a general nature and do not directly relate to indigenous education.

Two sampling criteria were used when deciding which documents to include, both non-probabilistic. First, they were chosen purposively, since only these documents deal with the specific concepts and topics this research seeks to understand (Babbie, 2010, p. 193). Moreover, these documents are equivalent in content and population to which they refer, both contain guidelines for educating the part of population attending schools that does not speak the national language or belong to different cultural contexts.

The second criteria was convenience (Bryman, 2012; Lund Research Ltd, 2012), the units selected for inclusion in the sample were the easiest to access. Since documents written in Norwegian would be impossible to analyse the English versions were the only options. Accordingly, the same criterion was applied for the Mexican documents, in order to time-frame the research process only the documents considered indispensable were taken into account.

The advantages of working with documents, according to Creswell (2009, p. 180), are several; documents are accessible at any time and spare the researcher the need to disturb people while they do their daily activities, further, curriculums are documents that received special attention when written thus enable the researcher to obtain the words and points of view of the authors. On the other hand, he mentions some disadvantages as well; versions in languages different from the original might contain different information and, as commented before, being curriculum an official document might portrait education in a light suitable for international observation.

3.2.3 Research method

For the collection and analysis of data obtained from the Mexican and Norwegian curricula the research method of Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) was chosen. According to Abela (2002), generally speaking, QCA uses reading as a tool of preference. In short, close reading and interpretation of textual material occupy a central place in this methodology (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 450). Since the research questions target concepts and points of view about indigenous education, QCA seems more suitable than other methods of analysis because it looks at what curriculum developers consider important to convey in regard to specific areas of culture and identity. Moreover, by paying close attention to what is written as well as to the textual implications and possible number of interpretations generated by such documents this methodology seems to ensure a more apt tool to address the challenges posed by the research topic.

QCA is a research technique appropriate for extracting data, in the form of inference, from verbal and written discourse. QCA stresses the relationship between content and context; it is a relational analysis as well as a conceptual analysis (Colorado State University, 2013). In this case context “includes the purpose of the document as well as institutional, social, and cultural aspects” (Robson, 2011, p. 272). QCA applies a hermeneutic approach to textual analysis, for the interpretation of such data will focus on the specific social and historical contexts of these cultural areas (Bryman, 2012, p. 561). This methodology has several other advantages. Firstly, it allows careful observation without disrupting the contents or the context. Secondly, documents are a stable reference that can be accessed at any given time and be subject to reanalysis, corrections, reliability checks, and further replication studies. Finally, it is a low-cost method both in resources and time. On the other hand, some questions are raised in regard to QCA as an accurate method of analysis. Because authorial bias and experience play such an important role in this particular approach, as well as variables in interpretation and thematic nuance, challenges rise to be surmounted by the professional reader.

According to Bryman (2012), when applying this methodology the collection of data and process of analysis are simultaneous activities. Since the research has a qualitative approach, the development of categories is held differently as with the method of common Content Analysis. Mayring (2000) explains that in QCA categories have to be developed inductively.

Moreover, since the process is of a thematic nature it entails an interpretative approach, that as Bryman continues to explain, comprises a search of underlying themes in the materials held for the purpose of examination. For him, this type of research is a constant discovery and a constant comparison of relevant situations. A clear explanation of what each dimension is concerned with should prevent codes from overlapping, directly reflecting on the research as a reliable source or study.

It should be noticed that QCA has three distinct analytical phases (Bryman, 2012; Kohlbacher, 2006; Mayring, 2000). First, categories should emerge from the material itself. For instance, during the first stage of the data collection process a general analysis with the intention of removing non-relevant information will take place. This first instance is also known as ‘summarizing content analysis.’ In the second part of the process ambiguous or contradictory passages must be clarified. This second phase is known as ‘explicatory content analysis.’ Finally, during the third stage, key features of the material being analyzed will be broken down to smaller components and described in detail.

Several articles and dissertations have been written using this method. Corona (2008) made an analysis of the content of textbooks for indigenous education in Mexico. Alvik (1991) analyzed the content of the Norwegian curriculum after it was revised in 1985 (insert name) and discusses the implications; Halvor Bjørnsrud & Sven Nilsen (2011) performed a content analysis of the last three national curricula in Norway with regard to teachers’ curriculum potential and the principles for adapted teaching and inclusive education, and Faas (2011) examined how cultural diversity and Europe are intertwined in geography, history, and citizenship education curricula in Greece, Germany, and England. In this particular dissertation, following QCA procedures, the initial categories were constructed after a first encounter with the data. Subsequent readings were directed by the aims of the research questions and initial categories were refined, as well as new categories created, due to the nature of the first findings. For instance, since many references about active participation in society and democratic practices were found, a special category of “participation and inclusion” had to be created. After these categories were clearly outlined and defined a second more detailed analysis took place in order to determine what each dimension entailed and what factors should be taken into account when assigning a category to a specific piece of information. Due to the close relationship between themes, a piece of data was placed under a certain category only if it was clearly mentioned in it or was the major topic. Such was the

case of culture and identity; in both curricula the topics were closely related, hence in order to differentiate them, data was considered as correspondent to the identity theme if: it directly mentioned identity, or if it associated cultural characteristics with belonging to a particular group, or as a tool to distinguish them. During the third stage, similar pieces of data were clustered together and analysed as part of the theme. To assure the validity of the findings, the topic was only considered relevant if similar quotations were found more than three or more times.

3.3 Ethics

Since the research does not deal with individual identities or personal stories in anyway and instead focuses on public documents it follows that there is no need for specific permission from the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). Although researches do not require a formal consent other elements play an important role in the process of gestation of such project. In a first instance, all documents must be authentic (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011, s. 58). The veracity of the documents was assured by obtaining all of them from official online sources which also ensured finding the most updated versions available. As mentioned above, the research needs to be culturally sensitive towards the evidence and must take into account the fact that it is (indirectly) dealing with underrepresented and marginalized human groups. In short, the research should serve as an instrument that creates spaces for dialogue, improvement, and empowerment (Liamputtong, 2010, p. 12). On the other hand, acknowledgment of cultural differences prevents misinterpretation. Following the ethical guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2011) the researcher (or practitioner-researcher in this case) has the responsibility to respect at all events the diversity in points of view that might emerge throughout the process, being mindful of cultural, religious, gender, and other significant differences. Finally, as also mentioned in BERA, the researcher should avoid fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data, findings, or conclusions following a favoured hypothesis or point of view.

4 Findings and discussion

4.1 Findings

This chapter will deal with the presentation of the findings. Each section includes the Norwegian and Mexican findings respectively. In order to differentiate one document from the other at the end of each quotation the abbreviation of the title is shown next to the page number. This system was adapted in order to clearly identify from which document the information was retrieved and avoid creating confusion by mentioning the same institution as the author every time.

4.1.1 Ideology

Norwegian curriculum

Curriculum developers choose a particular ideology from which to build their curricula. In the Norwegian case the emphasis is on the individual experience of each learner.

The point of departure for schooling is the personal aptitude, social background, and local origin of the pupils themselves. Education must be adapted to the needs of the individual. Greater equality of results can be achieved by differences in the efforts directed towards each individual learner. (L 97, p. 5)

The cultural baggage that learners carry with them, from the home, local community, or earlier schooling, determines which explanations and examples have meaning (L97, p. 22).

The subject shall develop each pupil's language and text competences, based on the pupil's aptitudes and experiences, and stimulate good learning strategies and the ability to think critically. (SCSFL, p. 1)

Throughout the four documents a Learner Centered Ideology is prevalent. The idea that the background, language, and culture of each individual learner must be considered is pervasive in the four documents. Pupils are seen as “holistic organisms; conglomerates of intellectual, social, emotional, and physical components” (Schiro, 2008). The curriculum seems to consider education should sprout from the learner’s needs, interests, and concerns as each

individual experiences them. In this regard, instruction of the target language should address not only the linguistic dimension intrinsic to the user's background but also his or her cultural heritage. This insistence on the learners' acumen and capacity of discernment are best reflected in the fact that language is seen an instrument to both encompass and stimulate a critical stance to culture and identity. Further, if we refer to the importance ascribed in the Norwegian curriculum to the individual background of learners in regard to the learning process, teachers must then be aware of the differences that might rise from learner to learner in order to adapt to their individual necessities. They are also concerned with developing the skills and procedures they will need in the workplace and at home in order to lead productive lives and ensuring the functioning of society (Schiro, 2008, p. 4).

Evidence related to the relevance of pupil's community involvement in order to strengthen and develop a sense of social belonging was found in all documents. Moreover, statements in regard to the importance of forming citizens capable of self-insight and awareness of cultural and individual diversity were also found.

The education shall be adapted so that the pupils can contribute to the community and also experience the joy of mastering tasks and reaching their goals. (QF, p. 4)

The school shall provide pupils with a broad preparation for life - for cooperation and harmony in the home and during leisure, at work and in the community. (L97, p. 21)

Traces of the Social Reconstruction ideology can also be found in the documents but to a lesser extent. For instance, individuals are seen in relation to society; transformed through the prism of interaction with others and at the same time as agents of social transformation themselves. Students are viewed as potential catalysts of change and as such be capable of critical analysis, informed decision-making, respect, and understanding of cultural and ideological variables in inter-group communication.

To develop the pupils' social competence the school and apprenticeship-training enterprise shall ensure that pupils are trained in various types of interaction and problem and conflict solving when working on their subjects and in the enterprise. The pupils shall develop as independent individuals who consider the consequences of and take responsibility for their own actions. The education shall help to develop the sense of social belongingness and mastering of various roles in society, working life and leisure activities. (QF, p. 3)

Education that promotes positive attitudes to the Sami language, and which considers the linguistic and cultural diversity the pupils experience, will provide the pupils with

multilingual and multicultural competence and linguistic self-confidence that constitutes the basis for active social participation and lifelong learning. (SCSFL, p. 1)

In general, schooling is considered as the locus wherein neophyte members of society are formed and transformed. The latter is regarded as an organic composite with clear cultural boundaries, which in turn must be aligned with a set of expectations within the private and public spheres. According to the documents, the learning process shall be based on the learner's individual background and interests. It is by connecting their experiences and previous knowledge with the societal reality that critical and actively-involved members of society can be formed.

Mexican curriculum

In this regard, as I will discuss below, indigenous groups linger in a variety of interstitial and fragmentary realities that must be honed into in order to examine and extract their most basic needs. As well as in the case of the Norwegian curriculum, the Mexican curriculum is predominantly learner centered oriented.

The articulation of Basic Education is the beginning of a transformation that will generate a school focused on educational attainment by meeting the specific learning needs of individual students. (PE, p. 18)

The education offered to indigenous children will consider the cultural and linguistic diversity of indigenous groups and will adapt to their needs, demands and conditions of culture and language, population, social organization and forms of production and work.. (LGEIB, p. 11)

Pupils are expected to learn "how to learn" through experience, and reach the highest learning standards. Emphasis is placed on paying attention to the background of each individual; hence within the three documents the topic of cultural diversity in education is central to the design of strategies and educational goals. Supporting this idea, each document contains statements noting the importance of adapting the education to linguistic and cultural plurality of the indigenous groups.

Another trait of the documents that relates them to the learner centered ideology is the importance that community living has as part of the indigenous education.

It is necessary to diversify strategies for indigenous bilingual education, which currently only respond to one of the many sociolinguistic situations that can be found in the country: the indigenous language monolingualism. (LGEIB, p. 27)

The aim is to curb the cultural and linguistic erosion that has historically occurred in indigenous schools, as well as in other schools that receive indigenous population and immigrants, where a vision of the nation as urban and homogenous has always dominated the curriculum. (PE, p. 58)

The three documents recognize that in the past the aim of education was to homologate knowledge, overlooking the wide variety of cultures and backgrounds that exist in the country. Moreover, the curricula explain that even though the cultural diversity of the population is recognized in their guidelines and in the law, providing suitable education for each member of the population is not an easy task, in fact is far from being accomplished. For instance, under the bilingual education approach the more than 68 indigenous groups are supposed to receive education adapted to the language they speak and the level of knowledge they have about it. However, according to the General Guidelines for Intercultural Bilingual Education not all the forms of bilingualism (or multilingualism) are covered, and not all languages have properly adapted materials. Another drawback described in the curricula is the absence of equal opportunities to attend school and finish the basic education indigenous children experience. All documents acknowledge the situation and consider indispensable to create educational spaces that properly heed this population, but no specific actions or projects are specified.

...To obtain greater equality of opportunities regarding education, gender, regions and social groups such as indigenous people, immigrants, and people with special educational needs. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to expand the coverage and support given to the entrance of these students to school, reduce the educational lags and make substantial improvements to the quality and relevance of education. (PSE, p. 11)

A bilingual, intercultural education that generates better conditions to ensure that indigenous children have a greater chance of entering, remaining in and successfully completing their basic education. (LEIBG, p. 11)

Probably due to these conditions of inequality, the curricula also exhibit ideas within the social reconstruction ideology. According to the documents, education must propel students to develop their full potential, learn how to understand their surroundings and present reality; thereby they can act accordingly and improve their situation. Further, as it will be commented in

detail in further sections, children are expected to become honorable members of society, which actively participate in it

...An education that promotes the dignified growth of the individual, so he is able to develop his full potential, an education that enables the recognition and defence of his rights and responsibilities. (PSE, p. 7)

...to form citizens that appreciate and practice human rights, peace, responsibility, respect, fairness, honesty, and legality. (PE, p. 16)

It is necessary to generate in the students the willingness and ability to continue learning throughout their lives, develop higher thinking skills to solve problems, think critically, understand and explain situations from different areas of knowledge, information manage, innovate, and create in different orders life. (PE, p. 26)

Overall, the curriculum presents itself as being aware of the cultural differences of the population and states the importance of including the individual characteristics of the learners in their education in order to counterbalance the discrimination and inequality in the society.

4.1.2 Culture

Norwegian curriculum

The Norwegian documents seemed to show a tendency towards a multicultural perspective of the curriculum. The four documents describe the Norwegian society as increasingly multicultural and avow to the importance of becoming acquainted with the cultures that are part of it society, regarding them as valuable and worth preserving.

A meeting between diverse cultures and traditions can generate new impulses as well as stimulate critical reflections (L97, p. 11).

[Education shall] ...develop the pupils' cultural competence for participation in a multicultural society the education shall enable them to acquire knowledge on different cultures and experience of a wide range of forms of expression. (QF, p. 3.

Non-Norwegian groups are seen as a part of the society with the right to education and participation. Notwithstanding, remarkable differences between each document exist, mostly between the L97 and the other documents, encountering the most evident contrast in the Quality Framework. Both documents consider minority cultures as transcendental for the

development of the Norwegian society, however, the point of view from which these are perceived varies greatly.

Education shall be based on fundamental Christian and humanistic values. It should uphold and renew our cultural heritage to provide perspective and guidance for the future. (L97, p. 9)

Education must therefore convey knowledge about other cultures and take advantage of the potential for enrichment that minority groups and Norwegians with another cultural heritage represent. Knowledge of other peoples gives us the chance to test our own values and the values of others. (L97, p. 12)

... the increasing specialization and complexity of the global community requires a deepened familiarity with the main currents and traditional tones of our Norwegian culture. (L97, p. 31)

The L97 acknowledges the increased presence, in society in general and schools in particular, of cultures different to the Norwegian and considers them important for the development of the society. However, the National culture and traditions carry a much stronger weight. Indigenous and more recently immigrant groups are considered part of the society but their cultural characteristics are put in a secondary position in relation to the national culture. In contrast, the Quality Framework sees the inclusion of diverse cultures as an inherent part of education and social development. As observed in one of the previous quotations, it seems that the discourse of “Norwegian culture”, or national values is not as middlemost as in the L97, instead the idea of a multicultural society that has cultural understanding is a mainstay of the document. Further, the main idea in the document regarding culture seems to be associated with equality and recognition of the similarities and differences as part of one community.

To develop the pupils’ cultural competence for participation in a multicultural society the education shall enable them to acquire knowledge on different cultures and experience of a wide range of forms of expression. (QF, p. 3)

As for the Sami culture in particular, directly or indirectly all documents acknowledge them as part of the Norwegian society and culture. It may be understood that education in this case, should focus on developing cultural competency, comprising knowledge about Sami language, literary history and knowledge about Sami languages and dialects as well as similarities and differences in and between Sami communities.

The Sami language and culture are a part of this common heritage which Norway and the Nordic countries have a special responsibility to safeguard. This legacy must be nourished so that it can grow in schools with Sami pupils, in order to strengthen Sami identity as well as our common knowledge of Sami culture. (L97, p. 11)

Sami language education shall contribute to making children and young people members of Sami culture and social life, where cultural understanding, communication, formal education and identity development are key elements of the teaching. (SCSSL, p. 1)

The Sami language is considered as a tool for successful participation in society. The use of the Sami language will enable pupils to relate more deeply with their culture, understand the similarities and differences between Sami groups, and participate in public life. At the end of their schools years they should be able to communicate in Sami, expressing their ideas and their impressions about their culture.

Speaking Sami means communicating orally in active participation in many and different arenas. (SCSFL, p. 2)

Being able to express oneself orally in Sami as a first language means having the ability to listen and speak and to be able to assess the elements in a complex verbal situation, which is a requirement for communication with others when it comes to social interaction, working life and participation in public life. (SCSFL, p. 3)

It can be observed, that the diversity of groups is acknowledge and respect inside the curricula. The different point of view about their integration in society reflects a change in perspective, probably related to the period of time when each document was written as well as with the economic growth that the country experienced during that timeframe.

Mexican curriculum

The Mexican curricula conceive the society as pluriethnic, and highlight the importance of preserving the linguistic diversity that exists inside the country. Therefore the education addressed to indigenous groups has a bilingual approach.

Given the linguistic diversity of the country, education must be based on local and regional proposals that address the particularities of each language and indigenous culture. (PE, p. 46)

Bilingual education enables the harmonious development of the individual, the ability to communicate within their community and have access to the national culture, so the recommended bilingualism for indigenous education is one that allows the

development of indigenous languages and Spanish, in order to be able to interact without one language dominating the other, it is intended that children develop basic language skills that enable them to communicate in their native language and a second language; with similar competency. (LGEIB, p. 12)

This bilingual approach implies that every language and cultural trait have equal value educational and socially speaking. Moreover, bilingual education aims to develop through language knowledge related to democracy, identity, international solidarity, health, nature, arts, science, and technology, being of special relevance for this research identity and democracy. However, the curriculum also recognizes that delivering efficient bilingual education to every group is a very complicated task that is not always reached,

The student assumes and practices interculturalism as a key element for coexisting with others within the social, cultural and linguistic diversity. (PE, p. 40)

The need of addressing cultural diversity in schools and building intercultural education, will not only be solved only by asking teachers to develop inventories of the cultural characteristics of a particular community, neither discussing ethnic issues in the classroom, but also by defining methodologies and classroom content that enables students to value their culture and other cultures, so they achieve their full potential both in local society, as at the state and national levels. (LGEIB, p. 24)

In the same way as language, all documents seem to relate the understanding of the local culture as a prerequisite for understanding the national culture. So is that, pupils with an indigenous background must learn about their community's literature, history, oral traditions, testimonies, lifestyle and their relationship with other groups. Finally, it may be understood that the cultural diversity and the multilingualism present in the country emphasize the need to adhere to the basic curriculum specific content related to the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples and the experiences of migrants.

4.1.3 Identity

Norwegian curriculum

Again, as with the topic of culture, the concept of ethnic identity seems to be divided in two different perspectives. The content of the L97 is primarily focus on creating a strong National identity, hence, Christian values, the Nordic history, and traditions play a paramount role in defining what is commonly referred throughout the curriculum as “our identity”. Resembling the findings described in the previous section, in this document other cultures are accepted and represented as mirrors in which the National values and identity can be measure against and therefore be fortified.

The development of individual identity occurs through becoming familiar with inherited forms of conduct, norms of behavior and modes of expression. Hence education should elaborate and deepen the learners’ familiarity with national and local traditions - the domestic history and distinctive features that are our contribution to cultural diversity in the world. (L97, p. 11)

When transitions are massive and changes rapid, it becomes even more pressing to emphasize historical orientation, national distinctiveness and local variation to safeguard our identity - and to sustain a global environment with breadth and vigor. (L97, p. 31)

On the other hand, the QF leaves behind the idea of National identity, compared with the L97 identity development is treated as a required competence for social participation but does not discuss it in deep detail. Meanwhile, the curricula of Sami as First and Second Language encourage the learning of Sami language and culture as an indispensable key for the understanding and preservation of Sami culture. Members of Sami communities are expected to learn all the cultural traits in order to successfully communicate with other members of Sami communities and, at the same time integrate their traditional knowledge to their everyday lives.

The aims for the education are that the pupil shall be able to... discuss, elaborate on and explain multilingualism and multicultural belonging. (SCSFL, p. 6)

Through the encounter with Sami literature and different Sami languages and dialects pupils may develop their understanding of the linguistic and cultural diversity of Sami communities. (SCSSL, p. 3)

Broadly, it could be said that in the Norwegian curricula few remarks were made about ethnic identity. No explicit comments about the identity of Sami groups were made although the importance of the pupils being knowledgeable about their origins so they feel confident with them is mentioned.

Mexican curriculum

Similar to the findings about culture, the treatment given to the concept of identity is closely related to language and the recognition of cultural diversity, although is not specifically mentioned as often as culture or language.

Even though along the three documents the importance of celebrating and preserving the cultural differences of each group, the treatment given to the concept does not always distinguish between ethnic identity and national identity; the diversity of cultural traits are mostly considered as a part of a holistic view of the national characteristics and are usually presented together. What is more, specific remarks about identity are predominantly found in the curriculum for Basic Education and in the General Guidelines for Bilingual Intercultural Education.

We identify ourselves as a multicultural, multi-ethnic society with customs, traditions, languages , ideologies, and religions that embed the broad and varied mosaic that is our national identity. (PE, p. 8)

The exploration and understanding of the natural and social world aims at recognizing the social and cultural diversity that characterize our country, as well as and the world, as elements that strengthen the development of personal identity in the context of a global society where being part of a nation is a priority. (PE, p. 49)

...To strengthen the students' ethnic identity and well as their local, national and global identities. (LGEIB, p. 25)

To commit as Mexicans with the preservation and development of an ethnic and national culture, so that ethnic traits are appreciated in the national culture and this in turn, is recognized in the cultural diversity of the country. (LGEIB, p. 32)

As mention in the previous section, the teaching of the local language is seen as a vehicle capable of delivering propositional information that will mould their identity. This identity is related to their ethnic origins as it is related to the concept of nation. Nonetheless, the

statements made in relation to ethnic or cultural identity expose the necessity shifting the opinions about the indigenous groups to a more positive perspective. Again, the adversities surrounding the development of indigenous educations, such as intolerance, discrimination and lack of knowledge about the indigenous groups are mentioned as obstacles that need to be overpassed by intercultural education to ensure the strengthening of national unity, and from it strengthen local, regional and national identities.

The local knowledge will arise from a positive approach of the self that helps to develop a positive identity in indigenous children, allowing them to access interculturalism with well-grounded cultural bases, to establish symmetrical relationships with groups and individuals from other cultures, and to gain knowledge from others, being able to dialogue and contribute with their own knowledge. (PE, p. 58)

Develop the child's native language, reinforcing their sense of cultural identity. (LGEIB, p. 28)

Educational attention to diversity is less easily resolved than it seems, however, an option to do this is to adopt an intercultural approach which is defined as the form of educational intervention that recognizes and addresses the cultural and linguistic diversity, promotes respect for differences; seeks the formation of national unity, from helping to strengthen local identity, regional and national. (LGEIB, p. 23)

The documents suggest that the development of a positive and rich ethnic identity is elementary for the development of a national identity guided by diversity. Despite the difficulties that achieving this goal might represent, is the path that must be followed in order to obtain national unit and equal opportunities for all.

4.1.4 Participation and inclusion

Norwegian curriculum

Two main ideas were found around participation and inclusion. The first related to the inclusion of diverse groups in society, the second focused on decision-making and democratic participation.

School is a bearer of a culture of knowledge and a culture of cooperation which must be open to the surrounding world, yet at the same time counterbalance the negative impacts of the environment. (L97, p. 22)

Pupil participation involves taking part in decisions on one's own and the group's learning. In an inclusive learning environment, pupil participation is positive for the development of social relations and motivation for learning at all stages of the education. (QF, p. 4)

The curricula seem to consider of utmost importance that all members of society actively participate in the community. Mentions of common knowledge, social equality and cooperation were found several times in all documents. It could be understood that the intention of education is to foster a deep understanding of diversity in order to respect and accept difference. Therefore, a community of cooperation involves knowing about every group that integrates the society. Further, minority groups are considered to be in disadvantage since they arrive to the country knowing nothing or too little about the Norwegian culture. As a consequence when they first interact with the local culture they do not understand the rules and patterns of behaviour of the new society and tend to feel alienated. The curricula state the importance of teaching about the national culture in order to integrate the newcomers into the Norwegian culture. However, the fact that conflict may arise because of these differences is also recognized in the documents.

Newcomers to a country who are not immersed in its frames of reference often remain outsiders because others cannot take for granted what they know and can do - they are in constant need of extra explanations... (L97, p. 28)

Education should provide training in cooperation between persons of different capacities and groups with diverse cultures. But it must also expose the conflicts that can arise in encounters between different cultures. Intellectual freedom implies not only allowance for other points of view, but also courage to take a stand, confidence to stand alone, and the strength of character to think and act according to one's own convictions. Tolerance is not the same as detachment and indifference. (L97, p. 12)

Consequently, the documents of Sami as First and second language reflect this intentions, and also mention the importance of community living, where tolerance and successful communication between its members exist. For instance, developing the proper knowledge of

Sami's culture and language is considered to as a key to interact with other Sami groups as well as with the mainstream society.

Speaking Sami means communicating orally in active participation with others. This is developed through playing and games, experiences, learning, thinking, presentation and interaction. (SCSSL, p. 2)

The education shall promote cultural understanding and develop self-insight and identity, respect and tolerance. (QF, p. 3)

The second idea revolves around promoting democratic thinking; hence train pupils in the decision-making process, making them responsible for the effects of their choices in both their life and in the interaction with others. Therefore, aims of education is a society built around equality and solidarity among its members regardless their language, culture or place of living.

It must promote democracy, national identity and international awareness. It shall further solidarity with other peoples and with mankind's common living environment, so that our country can remain a creative member of the global community. (QF, p. 7)

Education should counteract prejudice and discrimination, and foster mutual respect and tolerance between groups with differing modes of life. (L97, p. 12)

It seems that the Norwegian curriculum considers relevant to teach children how to interact in society with respect, becoming conscious of their decision and the repercussions in society.

Mexican curriculum

According to the content of the Mexican curricula inclusion implies providing every individual with equal opportunities of entering school and receiving a quality education regardless his background, socioeconomic status or ethnic background.

...by recognizing the diversity that exists in our country, the educational system enforces this right by providing relevant inclusive education... It is inclusive because it intends to minimize the inequality of access to opportunities. (PE, p. 35)

Encouraging social interaction and communication of students should be made on equal terms and with a clear understanding of their characteristics and cultural conditions. (LGEIB, p. 25)

Assumed themselves and be recognized by others as members of the national society, of regional society and of the local society. (LGEIB, p. 32)

The recognition of cultural characteristics is relevant for the development of differentiated curriculum that incorporates the local knowledge into the aims of the general education. This new education should facilitate the integration in society and the achievement of social equality. Furthermore, part of adapting the education so pupils from every background are able to learn, has to do with including their community in the schooling process. The local community must be involved in the content design as much as in the general process of education in order to achieve the successful participation in education of indigenous groups.

Bilingual intercultural education for indigenous children will promote the participation of the educational community, authorities, organizations, and individuals of the indigenous community, in the definition of the purposes and educational content, as well as in the development of every process required. (LGEIB, pp. 13-14)

...a Mexican school that meets the demands of the twenty-first century, characterized as an area of opportunity for students in preschool, elementary and secondary education, whatever their personal status, socioeconomic or cultural; an inclusive school, respectful and free, with responsible community members, where the learning ability of every pupil is recognized. (PE, p. 17)

Due to the nature of indigenous groups, the involvement of the local community plays a major role in the maintenance of pupils in school and the success of the learning process. It is through the community that knowledge is transmitted and absorbed in the local culture. On the other hand, the curricula also considers relevant to educate pupils to be responsible citizens, completely aware of their democratic responsibilities towards their country. The documents state that democracy has to be built with tolerance, respect, and equality as basic foundations.

To strengthen democracy and the creation of citizenship, the school has to adopt and teach the ethics of responsibility and participation. Similarly, the training of children and young people according to civic and ethical values is the best way to internalize equal treatment between men and women, respect all the social, economic, political, ethnic and religious, as well as to prevent, address and resolve serious problems of our time, such as drug addiction, violence, inequality and environmental degradation. (PSE, p. 9)

Another feature of the curriculum is its focus on the development of attitudes , practices and values supported by the principles of democracy : respect for the law ,

equality, freedom with responsibility , participation , dialogue and the search for agreements , tolerance , inclusion and plurality .(PE, p. 26)

Skills for life in society... For its development requires: decide and act with critical judgment against the values and social and cultural norms; proceed in favour of democracy, freedom, peace, respect for the law and human rights; involved taking into account social implications of the use of technology, combat discrimination and racism, and sense of belonging to their culture, their country and the world. (PE, pp. 38-39)

Tolerance and equalitarian treatment are recurrently mentioned as values needed to foment in students, thus, emphasis is located in teaching them that regardless gender, ethnicity, religion or socioeconomic status they all are part of the same society. Consequently, their feeling of national belonging will be reinforced. Finally, being involved in democracy also signifies to teach students about human rights, what they are and how to practice them, especially in the case of students with indigenous backgrounds.

Educate citizens to appreciate and practice human rights, peace, responsibility, respect, fairness, honesty and legality. (PE, p. 16)

To ensure educational action: 1) Promote the improvement of the living conditions of indigenous peoples and their access to the benefits of national development, 2) encourage the observance and defence of human rights, especially those of women and children. (LGEIB, p. 21)

In summary, the Mexican curriculum deposits part of the responsibility in the community. It is suggested that by working with and through the community the quality of education will raise. Moreover, in order to evolve into a more inclusive society education should be based in the recognition of democratic principles and human rights.

4.2 Discussion

The following section contains a critical discussion of the findings formerly described. The discoveries were interesting since new topics emerge that were not considered at early stages of the research process, such as participation and inclusion. Each curriculum will be discussed separately and afterwards their similarities and differences will be pointed out.

4.2.1 Norwegian curricula

It's interesting how even though at all times the emphasis is placed on the individuality of the student, and in considering his/her historical context, community and family, generally the curricula does not seek to celebrate their differences as much as to generate in students an idea of membership sustained in their most basic knowledge.

The intention of the first part of the K06 is to define national identity starting from what are described as unique experiences but in fact have a much broader provenance, as thoughts of a “common descent and culture are used and drawn upon to give force to a sense of community and of a shared destiny” (Fenton, 2010, p. 5). In this case the role of ethnic groups is partially to denote the differences between their culture and the Norwegian culture, as explained by Crossley (2013, p.144) the identity of a group is created through interaction with other groups. Minorities are described as small spheres of values to consider, but that should be added and integrated into the national identity.

All this contrasts with the perspective of the Quality Framework, where national identity no longer occupies an important place in education, and instead, celebrates diversity and seeks for equal rights within a multicultural society. Such contrasting changes in perspective could be explained considering the date when each document was made.

These two ways of dealing with the categorization of the groups, demonstrates how identity is merely a social resource. According to Jenkins (2008, p. 20), changes are inevitable and are due to social and political movements. In this case the definition of identity has changed both nominally and virtually. Nominally, because the denomination moved from a vision of “Norwegian” as a single national identity to consider itself as a multicultural nation. Virtually, due to the large amount of migration that the country has received in recent years the composition of society has changed significantly (OECD, 2011). For the Norwegian curricula Sami language is a communicative skill that should be used to perpetuate the Sami history and traditions and to understand and relate themselves with other Sami groups, whether studied as a first or second language.

Returning to the subject curriculum ideology, all documents exhibited a tendency towards individualized, student-centered education. Its intention is that through materials and contexts relevant to the learner he/she will identify which ones are meaningful to develop positive skills that will accompany him/her in work and social life (Schiro, 2008). Within the

framework of critical theory this educational style, develops practical knowledge, which means that knowledge should be focused on understanding the environment, where each student has to develop their own tools of understanding and interpreting (Crossley, 2013).

This knowledge is absolutely necessary, but the learning process should not stop there, as Habermas describes it (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 134), there is not only one correct knowledge, on the contrary, many kinds of knowledge exist and is the duty of education to develop critical individuals who are ready to build social change.

The Norwegian denotes an emancipatory intention inside the Quality Framework, the students are expected to develop a critical thinking; to question their circumstances and understand the different ways of thinking that may exist. It also seeks to produce citizens involved in all areas of society, which are fair and tolerant of diversity. However, content that speaks clearly about empowerment and liberation indigenous and migrant groups are not very clear. A proof of this is that even though Norway is a leader in the recognition of indigenous rights (United Nations, 2011, p. 4) , in 2011 the progressive political party " Fremskrittspartiet " suggested "that the National Parliament denounce the International Labour Organisation Convention on indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries, abolish the Sami Parliament, repeal the key Finnmark Act, and do away with the administrative area for the Sami language " (UN-OHCHR). Although the proposal did not succeed, the ideological division on the role of the Sami people in society became evident.

Therefore, it becomes important to question to what extent the prescription of views of this political party or other affiliations in power diminishes the image that Sami people have of themselves and their capacity for freedom and growth. On the other hand, this request could also be considered as an attempt to maintain the status quo, as all rights won in recent years by Sami groups have empowered them, reducing their condition as oppressed, becoming instead “more and more in hands that work, and by working transform the world” (Freire, 2000).

4.2.2 Mexican curricula

The lack of tolerance and discrimination are two issues continually mentioned as barriers to indigenous peoples within the documents. Although they all give significant weight to the preservation of indigenous cultures and languages in reality little change is shown. According

to the National Survey on Discrimination in Mexico, there is a high degree of devaluation of these languages and cultures. The results indicate that 44.1% of the population believes that the rights of indigenous people are respected and have equal opportunities in education and health (Consejo Nacional para Prevenir la Discriminación [CONAPRED]- Universidad Autónoma de México[UNAM], 2011, p. 36).

The curriculum also emphasizes the importance of keeping alive the cultures within the framework of intercultural bilingual education to promote learning through simultaneous or quasi-simultaneous learning of at least one indigenous language and Spanish. The revitalization and promotion of indigenous languages is the key considered to be the key to the success of indigenous groups (Dei, 2011, p. 30). The intention of choosing this type of education seems to be related to the use of language as mean of transmitting much more than simple communication skills. Through language, pupils are expected to learn about democratic values and most important, to develop an ethnic identity that intertwines with what is considered to “Mexican”. It is interesting how at a first glance, the content portrays the idea that by being a multicultural society, having a strong ethnic identity even if it is not closely related to the ideal of national identity is accepted, but after further reading and a global and more critical consideration of the documents, discrimination and oppression are recognized as problems closely related to this groups in every aspect of life. Thereby, the boundaries forming the identity of these groups act as a source of social stratification, perpetuating forms of oppression and disadvantage (Chatto & Atkin, 2012).

Although the idea of promoting the use of the original languages seems to be pertinent for these groups’ identity construction and the maintenance of integrity and security (Jenkins, 2008), as it is explained by Freire (2000), the program is ineffective because the strategies and objectives are not designed from the point of view of indigenous groups. This is confirmed by examples from the researches described at the beginning of this thesis (Buenabad, 2011; Villanueva, 2011); teachers are not properly train in the language; children are not interested in learning it because Spanish has a higher status and is more fashionable than the indigenous language of their community. Supporting this argument, Corona (2008, p. 23) found, after analyzing the historical development of indigenous text books, that the tendency in indigenous education leans towards preserving the languages as distinctive features of the indigenous groups but lacks a deeper commitment to strengthen their participation in society.

As for the inclusion and participation of these groups in society, all three documents, and mainly the General Guidelines for Indigenous Education, highlight the role of the community in the recruitment and retention of indigenous students in school. Likewise, they emphasize the importance of including the community's modes of behavior and traditional knowledge in the pedagogical practices to facilitate their learning and ensure pupils will be able to use that knowledge in future periods of their life. All these actions are fundamental for the development in students a positive sense of belonging, making them sculptors of his own knowledge, able to select and restructure their environment (Giroux, 2009), thereby fortifying their identities. As Tony Booth (2011) mentions "increasing participation for all implies not only that everyone is entitled to participate in their local educational settings, but that education systems and settings are developed to be responsive to diversity in ways that value equally all children"

However these intentions do not permeate all aspects of indigenous education. One more time following the examples previously enumerated (Ruiz, 2012; Villanueva, 2011; Buenabad, 2011), it seem appropriate to question until what extent the community is included in the development of books and other materials. In order for it to be succesfull the content book's content shall be the result of a curricula built from the botton up, nevertheless the books are not always adapted to the dialect or specific culture of a group and what is more, the evaluations (such as the ENLACE test) sometimes do not reflect the integration of the community's knowledge.

A strength point of these curricula is that it follows international standards regarding education and human rights. Along the three documents the relevance of teaching and learning about human rights is continuously repeated. Further, knowing and defending the rights of indigenous peoples could count as emancipatory knowledge but, reports of discrimination, exclusion from school and educational backwardness indicate that although existing, those contents are not fulfilling their emancipatory functions and remain at the practical level.

4.2.3 Similarities and differences

Both curricula recognize diversity as a fundamental element of their societies. They also state the importance of creating a common ground where citizens share the same values, such as tolerance, respect for diversity, social inclusion and democracy.

As societies defined by social diversity, both nations have properly design curricula, shaped according to the international movements and treaties. The importance of preserving the cultural traits of indigenous groups is high lightened, particularly the linguistic differences are recognized and addressed; the intention of fully including every group in the country's democratic processes is also present. However, the examples found in both sides illustrate that regardless the inclusive intentions of the curriculum designers the society is not informed neither properly prepared to cope with the changes suggested in the documents; hence discrimination and exclusion are still occurring in everyday life.

The documents are also similar in their perspective of democracy and participation. For both curricula, the indigenous groups have the right to the same education as any other pupils so they develop skills useful for the working environment as well as communicative and decision-making skills that will facilitate the path towards indigenous participation in society. Therefore, they should be able to transmit their traditional knowledge, relate to other groups, be proud of their identity and defend their traditions while simultaneously understanding and participating in the mainstream culture.

Both countries have special guidelines for teaching indigenous languages, each with specific goals and procedures, but generally both seek that indigenous pupils learn to communicate; to interact with the natural and social worlds being capable of quantifying and describing it and, to successfully participate in society. The documents are oriented towards a positive view of cultural diversity, but examples show that despite the efforts discrimination and oppression are still present in society.

The differences consist mainly on how the documents define or approach specific topics. The Mexican curricula view the cultural diversity of the country mainly in terms of language diversity. The focal point of education is to teach the indigenous groups about their own culture but linking them to society by teaching them Spanish. In contrast, the Norwegian curricula is focused in developing cultural competence; the understanding of social norms of conduct, traditions and values that define both the indigenous group and the Norwegian society. Language although important does not occupy a central role in all documents and is seen a communicative skill.

Based on these objectives, it may be inferred that their understanding of identity is also different, though not opposite. In some parts of the Norwegian curriculum a very strong sense

of identity is invoked, the need to differentiate from other international groups sets the tone for considering that immigrant and indigenous groups inside the country need to be immerse in the National culture, not to erase who they are as much as to create one strong nation. On the other hand, the Mexican curricula consider that diversity has always been a part of the national identity, although equality has never accompanied it. The relevance of preserving the ethnic identity of every group is clearly stated; however it is always linked with issues of discrimination, indifference, intolerance and poverty.

Overall, the two curricula have very similar approaches to indigenous education, both believe in the importance of relating the content with the pupil's context in order to adequately educate indigenous pupils leaving them ready to interact at all level, nationally and locally. Additionally, both consider the ethnic identity of the groups as part of a broader national identity, even though it is more clearly stated in one curriculum than the other.

5 Conclusions and recommendations

The findings show that both curricula acknowledge the importance of adapting education to the context of the learner. According to the conditions prevalent in each country, the emphasis on language and community knowledge remains a central tenet. The Mexican curricula utilize a bilingual approach to education, where Spanish is an important instrument to achieve social cohesion between the local communities and society at large. Additionally, the documents stress the importance of raising awareness about indigenous cultures and their identity as well as the high rates of discrimination, exclusion, and poverty that beset these human groups on a daily basis. In Norway, language is also seen as a bridge across cultures within a larger cultural area, a communication tool that facilitates the integration in society of Sami people and their interaction with other Sami groups.

Although both documents state the importance of protecting the cultural differences and strengthening the ethnic identity of indigenous groups, cultural characteristics are seen as part of a larger national identity on one side, and as a contrast inherent to the complexity of the latter. In the first part of the Knowledge Promotion, the aim is to create a strong national identity that will unify the country and differentiate it from other nations. Therefore, the role of minorities is to serve as the point of comparison between Norwegian values and external values. It is not until the publication of Quality Framework that we first see the intention of integrating marginalized and indigenous groups to society, without pursuing policies that seek to homologate their cultures.

Not as clearly outlined as in the Norwegian curriculum, the intention of creating a common national identity seems also the aim of the Mexican documents. To this we may add that the amount of social space reserved to an autonomous indigenous identity seems to be broader, in inter-curricular terms, in the former and better-implemented in the latter. Such reality makes itself apparent in the fact that inclusive education in Norway, in regard to indigenous groups, enjoys a relatively longer tradition. The alignment of curricula, in linear terms, took place over a period of time stretching over four decades. Period during which, vague notions of cultural considerations in second language instruction were not strong enough to surpass the

conditions sustained by hegemonic dominance. Autonomy remains a key feature to be observed.

Political deference on the part of indigenous groups in Mexico towards the policy-making of the central government generates a culture of frustration and political apathy that prevents the kind of political change needed to match the standards of its Scandinavian counterpart, whereas the parliamentary participation of Sami groups in Norway, however limited, is a major step forward for a democracy that has elevated the latter to the status of second national identity. Considering the implications in regard to inclusive education we may conclude that a gap in national human resources is, if not altogether breached to a full extent, at least addressed through the right channels. This concomitant of minority group inclusion is rather unconventional and may lead us to foresee that an oceanic dialogue across cultures could both promote initiatives towards emancipation and participatory democracy. One of the side effects of globalization, in regard to the topic of discussion, is the increment of awareness in regard to a common human identity as well as bringing to light conditions of existence that need be addressed by governments and curriculum developers, such as is the case of the exclusion and further alienation of minority groups.

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